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NEUKOMM'S DAVID.

This oratorio was composed for the Birmingham Festival, and first performed in 1884. Its success was but equivocal. It has remained unnoticed for eleven years, and, but for the Sacred Harmonic Society, would most likely have sunk into oblivion. To produce a great oratorio demands a mind full of lofty ideality, together with a practical facility of high order. Since Handel, only one writer has given to the world a *chef d'œuvre* in this department of musical composition. That writer is Mendelssohn—the *chef d'œuvre* is his *Paulus*, decidedly the greatest achievement of modern times by a living artist. Haydn's *Creation*, to go half a century back, is not up to the standard of his instrumental masterpieces. Bach's *Passions* is much more talked about than known; and our acquaintance with the score leads us to be wary of the enthusiasm of its wholesale admirers, who place it far above the finest works of Handel. Its complexities are so enormous as to render its correct performance almost an impossibility, and it rarely betrays the sublime simplicity which is so often the secret of Handel's mightiest effects. Beethoven's *Mount of Olives* is essentially dramatic, and, moreover, is too brief to admit of its being classed among the great oratorios. To return to the present day—Spohr, the only possible rival of Mendelssohn, though his oratorios abound in beautiful melodies, delightfully harmonized and instrumented, does not sustain that upward flight, which is the first quality we look for in such important efforts. To speak of the Chevalier Neukomm in such company were absurd. He has few pretensions to merge from the ranks of ordinary composers, albeit a tolerably good specimen of the average talent of modern Germany.

We find in the oratorio of *David* three characteristics, which entirely put it out of the scale of classicality. Firstly, its style is trivial; secondly, its effects are theatrical; and, thirdly, it is written throughout with a disregard of the severe counterpoint, which is properly insisted on by critics as the basis of grave and lofty aspirations. It is not, however, without great merits. Though we find little novelty in its melodies, there is an evident flow of thought; and, though the construction and development of the choruses are equally undistinguished by originality, there is no lack of a certain kind of propriety of effect, which proclaim their composer a musician of feeling and discrimination. Moreover, the orchestration, though sadly cut up by a quantity of flimsy solos and *obligato* phrases for different instruments, is by no means deficient in skill and variety. The Chevalier Neukomm—undoubtedly a thinker—is not, however, a philosopher or a poet. He expresses the sentiment of his music by the predominance of some particular instrument, rather than of some particular musical idea—in other words, he varies and colours by his orchestral treatment, not by the development of his first thought. This is the method of inferior composers, whenever they venture on long and elaborate works. Thus, in spite of a flippant prettiness induced by orchestral variety of colour, monotony is the prevalent feeling. The characters in *David* are David, Saul, Jonathan, Goliath, Michael, David's sister, a high priest, a messenger, the chorus—consisting of shepherds, warriors, Levites, attendants, &c. The book, by the Rev. John Webb, M.A., involves the most striking incidents of the early life of David—his slaying Goliath—his intimacy with Saul—Saul's jealousy, and attempts to destroy him—Michael's love—Jonathan's friendship—the battle, and death of Saul and his sons—the anointment and coronation of David. These matters are treated by the compiler in a tolerably commonplace fashion—though more judiciously, because more succinctly—than by the poet who contributed the words of *Saul* for poor Handel. Many of the same incidents and situations occur in both oratorios—and, though *Saul* is one of the least of the efforts of Handel, we could not but reflect on his vast superiority, even in moments of uninspiration, to the Chevalier Neukomm, wherever the treatment of similar matters brought the dead giant and the modern dwarf—be this understood comparatively, and in pure figure—together. The first part opens with a short instrumental movement in B flat, of no great merit. The scene is the wilderness—David is going to leave his native place; a recitative of David (Mr Manvers) leads to a choral hymn in E flat, written for four choirs, and professing to be in sixteen parts. We cannot vouch for the number of parts, but we can vouch for the confused effect of a performance not over perfect. There is nothing striking, more-

over, in the hymn, beyond this unusual quantity of parts. An air of David, "My flock, my friends, farewell," and a recitative and air of David's sister, "Return, O David" (Miss Lucombe), display no salient points. Both were well executed by the vocalists. The scene changes to the valley of Elah; we are among the camps of the Israelites and their enemies. A chorus of the former, "Behold the giant," in F, is not without power, but re-calls, to its disadvantage, a similarly descriptive piece in Handel's *Acis and Galatea*. Goliath (Mr Machin) taunts the Israelites—David defies him—and a duet ensues, which is vocal, and well instrumented. Goliath is slain, and this gives occasion for a chorus in D major, depicting the joyful triumph of the Israelites. The force and instrumental colouring of this, added to the admirable precision of the choir, won a loud and general *encore*. The effect of the *diminuendo* at the conclusion is beautifully managed, and well suits the meaning of the words, which speak of night closing in, while darkness veils the slayer and the slain. A recitative and air of Michael, "Mighty Jehovah," beautifully delivered by Miss Barrett, is somewhat insipid. A march and chorus, describing the triumphant entry of the Israelitish army into Gibeath, would better suit Drury Lane Theatre than Exeter Hall. The instrumentation is, nevertheless, very brilliant, and the choir and band were all that could be desired. A *quartet* of slight pretensions leads to a chorus in C major, "Thou art a God of wonders," which is well written, bold, and effective. With this the first part concludes—spiritedly enough. The second part opens in the palace of Saul. The recitative and air depicting the *emmi* of Saul, the harping of David, and the dissatisfaction and malice of the king against the man whom Jonathan had brought to comfort him, are intolerably characterless and insipid. Nor the delicious clarionet playing of Lazarus, nor the harp lucubrations of Mr Chipp, nor, indeed, anything, could relieve the drowsy monotony of this portion of the work. Handel, however, has not been happy here, and, where Handel has failed, who could hope to succeed? A pretty barcarolle chorus of the attendants, in B flat, "Haste thee away," in some degree restored the interest of the audience, though its unsatisfactory execution showed a want of still further training. But for a poor episode of long-sustained notes, and a few chains of trite sequences, this chorus would be perfect. A disappointment was obliged to be endured by the audience, for which an apology was made by Mr Harrison, previous to the commencement of the scene. Herr Staudigl had been announced to undertake the music of Saul, but, it appeared, as we could gather from the apologist, that he had not arrived from Vienna. Mr Machin, luckily, was engaged in the first part as Goliath, and, being slain, had nothing more to do, and so undertook the music of Saul at a moment's notice. The announcement was received with mingled hisses and applause; but the latter prevailed, and the steady singing of Mr Machin soon restored the malcontents to good humour. The next scene, in the Hall of the Palace, contains a trio in E flat, preceded by a long and misplaced *symphony*, with horn and clarionet *obligato*. The trio has no other merit than the skill of its voicing; it was nicely rendered by Miss Barrett, Mr Allen, and Mr Machin. Scene the third contains a duet between Saul and Jonathan, the opening of which, in E minor, is charmingly pathetic; but the conclusion, in the major, is not so happy. Mr Machin and Mr Allen did full justice to this duet. A battle *symphony*, which ensues, beginning in C major and ending in A minor, has some forcible passages. A reminiscence of Spohr's overture to *Faust*, and certain hackneyed traits of Weber, however, deprive it of its claims to originality, while its excess of modulation weakens its interest. The subsequent chorus, in C minor, "O Israel, mourn," is admirable for its pathos and dignity. Mozart himself need not have been ashamed to own it. The last scene, at Hebron, contains a coronation anthem, of which the first chorus, in C major, "Hail to thee, David," is grand and imposing; it was also magnificently sung. An air of David, in E flat, derogates more than once into insipidity. A solo and semi-chorus, in E flat, gave Miss Lucombe a good opportunity of showing her fine voice and animated style to advantage. She won a rapturous *encore*, but the conductor remained nearly five minutes undecided whether to proceed or to allow Miss Lucombe to re-commence, during which five minutes our ears were literally stunned by the vociferations of the audience. This was a useless proceeding, since the *encore* was unequivocal and unanimous. The music allotted to Miss

Lucombe was originally written for M^{me} Stockhausen, which may account for its florid character. The oratorio concludes with a spirited and excellently written fugued chorus, in B flat, the key of the first introduction, by which a certain agreeable unity and completeness is induced. We wish composers would invariably adhere to this simple and natural plan.

In conclusion, it will be seen that we accord to the Chevalier Neukomm considerable merit, though we see nothing in his oratorio of *David* to constitute it a great work. It may, however, take a conspicuous position among the average compositions of the kind which we import so liberally from the continent; but we cannot conscientiously predict anything like lasting popularity in its favour. The Chevalier Neukomm was present at the performance last night. He is independent of professional emolument, and writes for amusement. He chiefly resides in England, where some of his songs, "The Sea," "King Death," and others, for example, have enjoyed greater public favour than is ever likely to be acquired by his oratorios. The Sacred Harmonic Society deserves much praise, however, for presenting this novelty to the public, and for the general excellence of its interpretation. To the conductor, Mr Surman, much credit is due for his steady and spirited method of directing. Handel's *Solomon* is announced for the 24th, with Miss Birch and Miss M. B. Hawes among the vocalists.

WOLVERHAMPTON MUSICAL FESTIVAL.

Wolverhampton, Friday.

In my letter of yesterday I intimated that good reasons for anticipating the further progress of this Triennial Festival are not difficult to find. Among them is an excellent organization. The institution has a "staff" sufficient for almost any development. Connected with the President, Lord Dartmouth, are about 130 Vice-Presidents, each of whom contributes five guineas or more to that noble charity, the Wolverhampton and Staffordshire General Hospital; but the actual management is carried on by a committee, having at its head Major Loveridge, a well-known and ardent amateur, and including among its members Mr G. Adams, Vice-Chairman, Mr C. Neve, Hon. Treasurer, the Mayor of Wolverhampton, and Messrs R. J. Lawrence and S. W. Page, Hon. Secretaries. These are the gentlemen to whom, and to their colleagues, belong the credit of having numbered the festival among conspicuous musical celebrations, and to them may safely be entrusted the expansion which awaits it in the near future. In view of that expansion it may be taken for granted that the good people of Wolverhampton will combine together and build a concert hall. At present the performances are given in an edifice primarily devoted to agricultural shows, and for that purpose, no doubt, well designed. The structure, however, is hardly adapted for musical displays. It has a low roof, and lacks the advantages necessary to the best acoustical effect. Moreover, it contains no organ, nor does there seem to be the necessary space for an instrument of adequate size. Clearly a proper hall is required, and, in answer to the demand raised by an enlarged and important festival, ways and means for supply will doubtless be found. There should, at any rate, be no difficulty in finding them among the public-spirited inhabitants of a town numbering nearly 80,000 souls.

At this morning's performance the attendance was not only large, but socially distinguished, while the town, usually so given over to pursuits not remarkable for "sweetness and light," put on its gayest attire and assumed quite a holiday aspect. Many of the streets were bright with flags, the bells of the churches rang cheerily, and the thoroughfares presented the unmistakable festival appearance common to all provincial towns on occasions of the kind. There was reason for this in the special nature of the programme, which, as I pointed out yesterday, offered no common attractions. I shall not be expected to dwell upon anything that was done as upon a novel or even unfamiliar feature. Amateurs everywhere know Mozart's *Jupiter* symphony, Beethoven's *Mount of Olives*, Hummel's *Alma Virgo*, and Gounod's *Messe Solennelle*. On the other hand, it is important to show the nature of the performance, because springing therefrom are considerations of the highest consequence not only to the present claims of the festival, but to its future character. Let me at once say that the conductor, Dr Swinnerton Heap, has under him an orchestra of very considerable merit. The fact that nearly all the instrumental artists are resident in the neighbourhood has already been pointed out. Now I must add that their ability, individual and collective, is not only beyond dispute, but equal to the demands of important works given on a serious occasion. This was amply proved by a rendering of the *Jupiter* symphony such as,

taken for all in all, had great merit. Quite perfect it was not, but perfection is a very rare phenomenon indeed, and no one has any right to be surprised at its absence. Short of flawlessness, the execution of Mozart's music deserved the highest praise. It was indeed surprisingly good, and suggested the coming of a time when the average London orchestra will need to look after itself, if desirous of retaining supremacy over country coeppers. The symphony was played with uncommon delicacy and refinement, no attempt being made to force Mozart beyond the line within which he obviously kept himself. There were no new readings and no exaggerations for the sake of mere effect. We had, in fact, the pure Mozart, conscientiously studied and carefully expanded by executive talent adequate to the task. This conspicuously appeared in the wonderful *finale*, which, even more completely than the overture to *Die Zauberflöte*, shows how a supreme master can employ the strictest musical science to the end of perfect artistic beauty. Much of the good effect was, of course, due to the conductor, Dr Heap, who had taken great pains in rehearsal, and in performance showed himself adequate to the highest duties of a *chef d'orchestre*. Dr Heap has most of the qualities essential to a good conductor. His knowledge and enthusiasm are indisputable; his indications are clear and decided; and he never seems to lose the calmness which gives confidence, or the presence of mind that wards off mistakes by skilful generalship. I say here, once for all, that the Wolverhampton Festival has, in Dr Heap, a musical chief perfectly competent to lead it on the road to distinction.

The chorus, nearly three hundred strong, and exclusively chosen, I believe, from Wolverhampton amateurs, earned great praise by the work done this morning. To begin with, it made no mistakes. I shall, perhaps, be told that a festival chorus never should make mistakes. That is true; but, beside a virtue thus matter-of-course, the choristers here displayed others. There were moments, both in the *Mount of Olives* and the *Messe Solennelle* when perfect intonation was not attained, but they were rare and exceptional. The rule was good, sound, and intelligent singing—nay, singing with more than a suspicion of dramatic feeling about it. For instance, the music of the Roman soldiers in Beethoven's work has rarely been given with greater force of expression. As regards delicacy and refinement, those qualities were amply asserted in Gounod's music—above all in the "Benedictus," where the mass of voices worthily emulated the chaste and subdued delivery of the solo by Miss Mary Davies. After the foregoing testimony it is needless to multiply words. Enough that I recognize in the resources of the present festival the material of all that future development may call for. There is no reason whatever why a high standard should not be reached. The solos were taken this morning, in the *Mount of Olives*, by Miss Anna Williams, Mr Maas, and Signor Foli; the popular tenor giving the recitatives especially with great feeling and true appreciation of their profound religious as well as musical sentiment. Signor Foli, of course, made very effective the dramatic part of St. Peter. In Hummel's pretty composition Miss Mary Davies took the solo, as she did the soprano part in Gounod's *Mass*. She sang delightfully throughout, rendering all her music with purity and expression that left no room for cavil. Miss Davies's associates were Mr Maas and Mr King, each of whom did entire justice to one of the French master's most beautiful compositions.

This evening there was again a large audience drawn together by Mr A. C. Mackenzie's cantata, *Jason*, a work written, as will be remembered, for the Bristol Festival of last year, and then produced under the composer's direction. It was heard to serious disadvantage in the western town, owing to lack of proper rehearsal, and it made far less than the effect of which all who have studied the music know it to be capable. The rendering this evening did greater justice to Mr Mackenzie's composition, though *Jason* has yet to benefit by the performance which shall fully reveal the author's purpose and make a complete interpretation of thoughts that in their expression are often complicated. It says much for the band and chorus directed by Dr. Heap that they attacked the work with anything like a satisfactory result. Mr Mackenzie makes little allowance for executive weaknesses. He knows what he wants, and expects that his interpreters will rise to his level rather than that he shall be required to descend to theirs. Moreover, the Scottish composer's method is essentially modern in its elaboration; modern, also, in the measure of disregard for vocal exigencies which often marks contemporaneous music, to its serious loss. Taking all this into consideration, I may congratulate the performers of to-night upon a very creditable and encouraging success. They showed themselves able to meet the demands of a new work that is nothing if not exacting. There were faults, of course, and it was not difficult for an experienced hearer to trace them to their source in insufficient full rehearsal. Dr Heap exerted all his powers, which are far from inconsiderable, but he could not give those whom his *baton* guided the assurance that

comes only of perfect knowledge and mutual confidence. Moments of hesitancy, a halting attack, and even occasional "raggedness," showed this festival performance to be in some measure affected by the common bane of its kind. The orchestral piece, "On the water," suffered considerably, which was the more regrettable because it is an exceedingly attractive and elegant specimen of Mr Mackenzie's talent. Of the three solo vocalists one, Mr Lloyd, took part in the Bristol performance; the others, Miss Mary Davies and Mr King, were new to the work. All did well, Miss Davies singing Medea's music with real dramatic feeling and expression; Mr King surmounting with distinct success the obstacles presented by strains lying mainly in the highest part of his voice, and showing himself a thoroughly good artist; while Mr Lloyd, in the not very thankful part of Orpheus, did all that was possible with qualities of the finest order. Mr Mackenzie's music was cordially applauded, both during and after its performance. A great feature in the second part was the execution by Mr Carrodus of the violin solo in Mendelssohn's concerto. The accomplished artist had a task both easy and familiar. How he discharged it there can be no need to tell. Among the vocal pieces were "O! ruddier than the cherry," sung with facility and effect by Signor Foli, and "Ocean, thou mighty monster," on which favourite *cheval de bataille* Miss Anna Williams again made conquest. There only remains to add, as a final conclusion regarding the Festival, that Wolverhampton may be proud of present success, and look forward to much greater results in after years.

ANOTHER REPORT.

With a boldness deserving of commendation, the committee ventured upon a novelty for this locality by selecting Sir George Macfarren's cantata, *The Lady of the Lake*, as the principal feature of the programme on Thursday evening, September 13th. "*The Lady of the Lake*" was composed at the request of the Glasgow Musical Festival Committee, in 1877. Last year it was performed at Paisley, the opening of the "George A. Clark Hall"—a gift to the town—being made the occasion of a three days' musical festival. The fine choral singing then heard gave great effect to the work, and strengthened the favourable impression created by its production at Glasgow. That it exhibits scholarship and a complete grasp of all the resources of art, "goes without saying," considering who is the composer. The libretto is adapted by Mrs Natalia Macfarren, the accomplished wife of the Cambridge professor, and is, of course, founded upon the poem of Sir Walter Scott. Upon the deviations from the text, and alterations to suit it to the exigencies of lyrical representation, we cannot venture at length to enter. The work is somewhat peculiar in construction, being partly dramatic, partly didactic—the chorus sometimes representing the author, sometimes reciting the narrative, and sometimes personating Clan-Alpine, the soldiery, or the courtiers. *The dramatis persone* are Ellen, Lady of the Lake (Miss Anna Williams); Malcolm Graeme and Blanche of Devan (a duel impersonation by Mme Patey); James Fitz-James, the Knight of Snowdown, (Mr Joseph Maas); Roderick Dhu, (Mr F. King); James, Earl of Douglas, and John of Brent, (both sustained by Signor Foli). The score contains twenty-four numbers, and there is no overture. A brief prelude at once introduces the "Fore Song," "Harp of the North," for voices in unison, with arpeggios for the harp, and unity is effected by closing with the same strain, slightly modified and shortened. The poem being so familiar, will need only such reference as bears upon the performance. The chorus describing the chase, and the arrival of Fitz-James at the "Brig of Turk," is highly graphic, and was well performed. The ensuing interview with Ellen, and the journey to the island are wedded to charming music, which was rendered with great dramatic force by Miss Anna Williams and Mr Maas. It contains a little gem of a song as they sail upon the lake, in which occurs a graceful passage in canon. The two-part song, "Soldier rest," for female voices, a worthy pendant, was sung to perfection. A scene for Fitz-James, depicting in graphic music his troubled dream, and the "Maiden's farewell," as he quits the island next morning is equally descriptive, and, chiefly unaccompanied, was sung with taste and perfect intonation. The boat song, "Hail to the chief," remarkable for its local colouring and Scottish idiom, was given with rugged force.

The progress of the story—up to the meeting with Roderick Dhu, his scheme of revenge, the prophecy of the Banshee, Ellen's song, "Ave Maria," and the welcome of the clansmen—is all arranged with consummate art, the interest increasing to a grand climax, which ends the first part. Miss Anna Williams gave her music in splendid style, and in the anathema pronounced by Roderick, Mr F. King gave evidence of real dramatic power. Part the second is even finer than what precedes. It goes on to narrate the meeting of Fitz-James with the poor demented Blanche of Devan, who, in a series of ballads cast in the antique Scottish mould, relates her

wrongs. Mme Patey in this scene created a marked impression by her characteristic rendering of these plaintive melodies, given without any accompaniment. The death of the treacherous Murdoch, the meeting with Roderick, the duel and death of the latter, are all depicted with masterly power, and afforded full scope for the singer. Mr Maas and Mr King were fully equal to the occasion. Signor Foli had a good opening as John of Brent in a rollicking soldier's song, where his voice told with great effect. Mme Patey, as Malcolm, the imprisoned huntsman, had perhaps the finest lyric in the whole work—"My hawk is tired"—which was given with such pathos as to arouse a storm of applause. About the dialogue containing the "Catastrophe," we need only say that both in conception and treatment it brings the work to a highly wrought out and dramatic close. The choruses were sung with more brightness of tone in the powerful passages than was the case in the morning. The "coronach" on the death of Roderick was a finished example of delicate singing, and throughout the choir did full justice to the work before them. At the conclusion a call was made for the composer, and Sir George Macfarren, rising from his seat in the hall, received a genuine ovation.

The programme began with the "Prisoners' Chorus," from Beethoven's *Fidelio*, which was only fairly performed, needing more familiarity on the part of the singers. Miss Mary Davies gave a beautiful rendering of Benedict's "I'm alone," in place of the song from Stanford's opera originally announced. The "Ballet des Sylphs" from Berlioz's *Faust* was well rendered by the hand. Mr Maas gave the "Prize Song" from the *Meistersinger* with appropriate energy, and an encore was demanded but not complied with, the artist being twice recalled. Miss Emilie Lloyd was very successful in Donizetti's "O mio Fernando," and received a hearty welcome. The concert ended with a capital performance of Nicolai's overture to *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. There was a large and brilliant audience, including Lord Wrottesley and other distinguished visitors. The first day of the Festival may be described as a genuine success, towards which the zealous labours of the conductor, Dr Heap, contributed not a little.—*Birmingham Daily Post*, Sept. 14.

VIOLIN MAKERS' MARKS.

(To the Editor of the "Musical World.")

SIR,—In answer to the question asked by J. R. Botterill, in the *Musical World* of September 8, I venture to enclose an extract copied from Jacob A. Otto's excellent little book on the violin, which will, I think, give all the desired information.

The name was, I believe, originally spelt *Steiner*, but more modern writers seem to prefer it as *Stainer*.

TH. M. HARRIS.

*The Cedars, Leighton Buzzard,
Sept. 13th, 1883.*

Extract from "*Otto on the Violin*" (page 24).

"The violins of Jacob Steiner, of Apsam, differ from the Cremonese both in general appearance and in tone. They have a higher model, and their proportions of thickness are calculated quite differently. Perhaps the most accurate comparison which can be drawn between the two is that the tone of a Cremonese violin resembles that of a clarinet, whilst the tone of a Steiner is similar to that of a flute. The belly is modelled higher than the back; and the height of the belly where the bridge stands is equally maintained for half the length of the instrument to the lower or broad part (under the tail-piece), where it then diminishes down to the end edge. The breadth of this raised part is about the same as that of the bridge itself, and then it falls off towards the edges. The model is precisely similar towards the neck, and on the broad part (beneath the finger-board). The edges are very strong and round, and the purfling, which is narrower than in the Cremonese (in which it is very broad), lies rather nearer the edges than in those instruments. The f-holes, which are rather shorter than in the Cremonese instruments, are beautifully formed, and their upper and lower turns are perfectly circular. The neck is particularly handsome, and the scroll as round and smooth as if it had been turned; some are finished with lions' heads, which are admirably carved. The sides and back are made of the finest figured maple, and the instruments are covered with amber varnish of a reddish-yellow colour. In some the peg-box is dark brown, and the belly deep yellow. These are their chief characteristics. Labels are rarely found inside; but when these do occur in genuine instruments they are always written; printed ones being only met with in the Tyrolean imitations. In the Cremonese instruments, however, they are all printed."

THE JOHN THOMAS PERMANENT WELSH SCHOLARSHIP.

The first competition for this scholarship, to be held at the Royal Academy of Music on Saturday, September 29, will undoubtedly mark an event in the musical history of the Principality; for although the musical talent of Wales has been for a long time an admitted fact, yet until lately that talent has had to force its way as best it could into notice. The occasion will certainly afford Mr John Thomas the gratification which success in unselfish work invariably brings. That well-earned pleasure will scarcely be lessened by the hearty recognition of recent and more extensive efforts on behalf of free musical education, for the movement now completed was set on foot by Pencerdd Gwalia years before the cause of endowed scholarships was taken up by nobles and princes. Therefore Mr Thomas cannot be accused of following in the wake, much less of opposing, benevolent projects still in agitation, for there were absolutely no labourers in the field when he commenced his task. Then it was he felt that the gift continuously manifested by his countrymen at Eisteddfodau and elsewhere needed help for full fruition; that in many cases where bright talent shone the *res angusta domi* cruelly forbade artistic or social advancement. Then it was he proposed to himself the task of establishing a scholarship by which the promising young of his native land should have at least one opportunity of evading the force of untoward circumstances. To endow a scholarship at the Royal Academy of Music £1,000 was needed. Not a large sum, perhaps, but the list of subscribers shows that it was not so readily obtained. It is, however, pleasant to find therein gifts of the wealthy and titled supplemented by offerings of the less fortunate; to see pence with shillings swelling out to reach the requisite amount. This proves that the people, feeling the cause to be their own, did not leave it entirely to patronage, but gave an active and personal support. This is as it should be. It sometimes happens, however, that people will not easily be convinced of their wants. Do not the Royal and aristocratic promoters of musical education in England still lie under this difficulty? If the English had, like the Welsh in the present case, given of their pence, would the Prince have had to toil and wait so long for the fulfilment of his philanthropic scheme? Surely those who feel hunger will seek food! The Cambrian, having a passion for the art, hails with eagerness any chance of enjoyment or improvement. Mr John Thomas had the advantage of having several enthusiastic coadjutors, amongst whom should be mentioned Mrs John Williams, Mrs Jones Williams, Miss Helen Stone, Miss Wageman, and Mrs Price. Indeed, the ladies, as usual, have shown a rare industry and courage in "passing the plate," for without them Mr Thomas would have been longer at his task. Years hence they will doubtless see with pride the results of their labour, and many of them will not fail to watch with interest the trial of female vocalists on the 29th inst. for the first scholarship. The stipulated qualifications for candidates refer to age, race, and—this time—to sex; those who present themselves must be females under eighteen years, either born in Wales or of Welsh parents. The adjudicators will, for certain, be musicians of the highest class, and the prize awarded without fear or favour.

P. G.

FIELDING AND THACKERAY.

(To the Editor of the "Musical World.")

SIR,—In reference to Dr Blidge's note to my letter on the subject of Fielding, I must differ from him when he styles Thackeray the foremost of English novelists.

Comparisons, as we know, are in all cases undesirable, but they are perhaps particularly unsatisfactory when employed in relation to individuals. However, let me say that I consider Thackeray greatly inferior to Fielding. His works are laboured, and wanting in that spontaneity, and what Coleridge calls that "cheerful, sunshiny, breezy spirit" which are so characteristic of Fielding. The latter, too, seems always to have something to say, and a nature impelling him (irrespective of his unhappy circumstances) to say it; whilst Thackeray finds something to say in order to acquire fame and obtain a livelihood, and might almost be said to have sacrificed quality for quantity.

Thackeray, doubtless, was happy in his portraits of women, but we must not forget that the phases of human nature as we find them in Fielding are, for the most part, as he tells us, of a particular virtue, "as desirable and becoming" (and, therefore, as applicable)

"in one sex as in the other"; and that perhaps the most beautiful qualities, distinctly feminine, in woman are those very ones which you attribute to Fielding's heroines—constancy to a man and reverence for what is manly in him. It is probable that his contempt for the women of Richardson led him to neglect the sex. At the same time we should also bear in mind that in his days (as he remarks in *Tom Jones*, Book XIV. Chap. I.) women were "so entirely made up of form and affectation that they have no character at all, at least, none which appears. . . . Dressing and cards, eating and drinking, bowing and courtseying, make up the business of their lives." It is to me impossible to conceive that Fielding could not have drawn better women if he had wished.

But a novel, like any other work of art, must be viewed as a whole. To compare one character or one chapter in Fielding with another character or chapter of Thackeray would be idle and invidious, and I will not attempt it. I will simply add, for one thing, that Thackeray's philosophy is miserably weak, and his digressions, in this respect, at times almost ridiculous in their irrelevancy. Fielding keeps this part of his work separate from the story, and thus prevents involvement and enhances light and shade.

The author of *Pendennis* was, undoubtedly, a great disciple of Fielding, for whom he had excessive reverence, more than he shows in his *Humourists*. I recently had in my hands an edition of *Tom Jones* (the little "Cooke's Edition," which Thackeray always preferred) with a long autograph epistle to his son, written on the fly-leaf, in which he urgently recommended the book to his careful study. I unfortunately omitted to copy the inscription or I would give it.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

HENRY E. DUDENEY.

September 18, 1883.

[This subject should have been ventilated long since. In my present state of health and hard work, I have neither the strength nor time at disposal—had I even the inclination—to approach it. I shall, therefore, hand it over to Beard, who, notwithstanding his enormous self-conceit, will, in turn, hand it over to D. Peters. Meanwhile, I retain my own opinion.—Dr Blidge.]

TWO!

(From "The Theatre.")

Two on a cliff, with the kiss of the sea,
Filling their hearts, and their lips, and their hair.
Two without shelter of rock or of tree,
Facing pure peace, or the sands of despair!
But one in the soul that can lift them along;
One in the spirit, and one in the touch;
One in the melody, one in the song,
Who can wish more, or dare ask for as much?

Two in a boat in the toss of the tide;
Two in the sight of the leaf and the land;
Two on the breast of the waves that are wide;
Two on the narrow gold strips of the sand.
But one on the ocean of love and at rest,
One midst the rush, and one in the roar;
One like a bird winging home to its nest,
Who asks as much, or dare hunger for more?

Two in the gold of the sun as it sets,
Two close together at death of the day,
Two in the world that forgives and forgets;
Two with the joy of the beach and the bay.
But one in the kiss, and one in the prayer;
One in the heaven, and one in the blue;
One in the light, and the life, and the air:
Who can ask more! O! my darling, can you?

By the Sea, August, 1883.

C. S.

BRUSSELS.—Miss Grisswold has appeared at the Théâtre de la Monnaie, as Mireille in Gounod's opera of that name. The board of examiners at the Conservatory have decided on not awarding a grand prize this year. Second prizes have been adjudged to Heckers of Ghent and Soubre of Liège.

COVENT GARDEN PROMENADE CONCERTS.

The first part of the programme on Wednesday evening, September 19th, was principally devoted to the works of Mendelssohn, when a further proof, if any were needed, of the popularity of the composer of *Elijah* was proclaimed by an immense audience in an enthusiastic manner. Such evidence of the healthy taste of the public sets aside the acrid criticism of those who would wantonly displace Mendelssohn from the high position he has so long held in the judgment and affection of the English people. The selection on Wednesday was judiciously made, and its performance was in most cases beyond reproach. The familiarity which the fine band, under Mr Gwyllyn Crowe's direction, manifestly has with the music, gives that entire freedom and character so necessary to perfect enjoyment. In such cases the delight seems mutual, the performer and listener partaking of the same pleasure. The March from *Athalie* was given with pomp and majesty, and the romantic strains of the *Ruy Blas* overture were graphically rendered. The *capriccio brillante* in B minor had the advantage of being interpreted by Miss Josephine Laurence, who, by her performance of the solo part for the piano-forte, showed that she had been taught in the right school. The lady was honoured by a recall. The playing of Mr Carrodus in the violin concerto is happily too well known to need remark; the same command of his subject, with the same elaboration of the themes, again secured for our great English violinist immense applause. The instrumental music to the *Midsummer Night's Dream* closed the selection. It would have been well had all the artists, like Mme Enriquez, chosen their songs from Mendelssohn's works, for the talents of Miss Jessie Griffin, a *debutante*, would have been as well displayed in such a song as "Jerusalem" (*St Paul*) as in Haydn's "On mighty pens," and Signor Poli might have been as successful in any one of the airs from *St Paul* or *Elijah* as in Handel's "Why do the nations." When only one part of the programme is devoted to classical music it would be well not to break the continuity which strains by the same master supply. The second part was, as usual, miscellaneous.

THE MUSIC O' A ZUMERZET FAIR.

(To the Editor o' "The Musical World.")

ZUR.—Your readers, o' course, know all about Crewkerne fair, held al'ys the furst Tuesday in Zeptembur; how 'tis the biggest fair i' these parts, and how much we think on't. Why bless 'e we reckun by't, and to reckun easy we (I mean o' course Crewkerne folk) like to marry about the time, and to 'a' babies near 't. The year be like a stick, and the fair the notch on 't, vrom which we reckon burthas, deaths, and marriages. Now zome o' your readers 'ull say "what's that to us? we doant read about anythin' but music." Stop a bit plaize! I find music in moast things, and zurely thure be lots on 't i' the fair. Like zome plays Crewkerne fair 'a' two acts. The furst, i' the morning, be the cattle-fair, the second, i' th' evening, the pleasure fair, and thure be plenty o' music at both. Were you, Mr Editor, thure i' the morning you'd 'ave hurd zume'ut to 'ave churpt 'e up a bit, zume o' nature's music. Why thure was a reg'lar band! The squeelin' o' the pigs wure highur than fiddles, the neighin' o' th' hosses clearur than trumpets, th' bleatin' o' the sheep zwearur than flutes, th' bellerin' o' bullocks deepur than them bass roarers made o' brass, and then how purty the chaps play'd the drum wi' theur sticks on the skulls o' th' oxen! I do azure 'e 'twure a real fine band. Then above all wure hurd the zoft talk o' the dealurs, such a-buzzin' and a fuzzin'. Praps you've neyur hurd the Zumerzet talk! For dealin' it beats burd-line holler, it drags a feller out o' his shoes in no time. And for lovin'—but I wont talk about that just now. Thure wure a chap in a cart that zold i' wi' a ombrellur. I gied'n two shillins for'n, and you should zee'n now!

Well atur cattle fair wure ovur I went to Mosterton—that's whure I live—to fetch my Till—the young woman I keeps company wi'—to the pleasure fair. Didn't she look nice in hur new bonnet! As zoft and zweet as a zong o' the fairies. Yet zomehow when she zings, or even speaks I get zad and zo low, just like a bad boy brought to his senses wi' zoft words. But praps 'tis 'cause when I furst zaw hur, she came in our house to help nurse and cheer little brothur Jack what died! Then hur voice brought a lump in my throat, and tears in my eyes, and zo ever zince when I hear hur I get thick in the throat and watery in the eye. Yet I like both when she brings 'em. Well when we come to the fair thure seem'd at furst he zame kind o' music, the zame roar, that al'ys zends my blood

a-tinglin'. But a'tur we'd been thur zome time I vound thure wure a gurt change. Afore thure used to be players, fellurs a-blowin' bugles and a-beatin' gongs and drums, now all wure done by machines. The big show had a machine like a mangle, with only one chap bezides a-whackin' a drum, another had a rusty orgin, but what come ovur I wure the "merry-go-round," turned, and the music made by the zame steam. Rot it, said I to Till, aint we enough puffin' on the farm wi'out any on't hure? Now I want you, Mr Editor, to put this zort o' thing down. But they tell I that in Lunnon music is done by machines, that the bands play like machines, that the zingurs zing like machines, that men and women, instead of making music out o' theur own heads, put bits o' other people's tunes into zome machine and out come zongs like sasagers from Muther Fusty's sasager machine. Well, another change bother'd I, which wure that thure wure no play-actors. Whure be'm gone? They tell I they be all made lords and ladies of, and gone to live in big housen in the Strand. But that's gammon. The truth is they've lost their fun and doant dare play again afore the merry Zumerzet chaps.

I zoon began to zee that Till wure uneasy like. She zeemed out o' place, just like a lamb in a kennel wi' all the dogs barkin'. Zo I axed her, atur buyin' a fairin', whethur she wouldn't like to go home. Zoon we wure in the vields a-trudgin' along, and startlin' the patridges, who, just as timid as Till, flew up wi' a whirr-r. When I zeed hur home she would 'ave me go back, for zaid she, "you must not be a milk-sop, but enjoy yourself like other men." Wurn't it kind? I did go back, and met zume pals o' mine, who hadn't joined the "blue ribbon." We gied it mouth at the "George." I do azure 'e, in zong and chorus, I zang "The Poacher," Hal Fred zang "I likes a drop o' good beaur," and other fellurs gied other things. And then I went out, although it rained hard, to ride on the steam "merry-go-round." My life, how queer I felt! I didn't even zee Zukey Giles afore I caught hold on hur as she wure tumblin' off. Then she axed me to let hur go home under my ombrellur. Dang th' ombrella! I offered to gie it to hur. No, she would make I carry it. I be ashamed to zay it, but if you had been in the road, you might 'a' hurd the music that two pair o' lips make when smacking togethur.

I am, zur, yourn to command,

P. GRIFFIN.

Mosterton, near Crewkerne.

BUDDHA.*

Whoe'er hath wept one tear, or borne one pain
(The Master said, and entered into rest),
Not fearing wrath, nor meaning to be blest,
Simply for love, howbeit wrought in vain,
Of one poor soul, his brother, being old,
Or sick, or lost through satisfied desire,
Stands in God's vestibule, and hears His choir
Make merry music on their harps of gold.

What is it but the deed of very Love
To teach sad eyes to smile, mute lips to move?
And he that for a score of centuries
Hath lived, and calls a continent his own,
Giving world-weary souls Heaven's best surprise,
Halts only at the threshold of the Throne.

A. C. BENSON.

* From "The Spectator."

HAMBURG.—Gustav Memmler, from Mayence, the newly engaged "heroic tenor," at the Stadttheater, selected for his first appearance the character of Tristan in Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*. Coming after so redoubtable a predecessor as Herr Winkelmann, Herr Memmler had no easy task, but he got through it admirably. Press and public are unanimous in approving of this latest addition to Pollini's company.

AMSTERDAM.—Herr Bilse's Orchestral Concerts were an exceptional success, as evidenced not only by the crowds attending, but by the high appreciation in which they were held by Herr Bilse's colleagues and fellow professionals. A more than ordinarily striking proof of this was afforded by the other conductors in the old town, when Beethoven's *Eroica* was announced. They gave all the members of their own orchestras a holiday, in order that they might hear the performance, which—probably because Herr Bilse's men were on their mettle—was doubtless a fine one. At its conclusion, Stumpff, Coenen, and Wedemeyer, three of the first *Capellmeister* here, presented Bilse with a laurel wreath amid the unanimous applause of the public.

DEATHS.

On September the 11th, at 10, Coburg Place, Bayswater Road, GEORGE FORBES, in his 72nd year.

On September the 16th, at Guernsey, ELLEN AMELIA, eldest dearly-loved and loving daughter of EDWARD and AMELIA ORRIDGE, of 2, Houghton Place, Amptill Square, London, N.W., aged 27.

On September the 17th, at Inverness Terrace, Bayswater, after a short illness, WILLIAM FINLAYSON, late of Cheltenham, aged 61.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

TENNYSON IN A MIST.—One of your own would have been more welcome. From Leeds to London would be a good subject for a sonnet.

TO ADVERTISERS.—*The Office of the MUSICAL WORLD is at Messrs DUNCAN DAVISON & Co.'s, 244, Regent Street, corner of Little Argyle Street (First Floor). Advertisements not later than Thursday. Payment on delivery.*

The Musical World.

LONDON, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 1883.

CHERUBINI.

(Continued from page 577.)

I now return to French artists, in order that I may say a few words respecting the particularly affectionate relations existing between Cherubini and two of his pupils, destined to become the glory of their country: Auber and Halévy. It has, unfortunately, been impossible for me to find any trace of the correspondence of one or the other with the Master whom they cherished so tenderly,* and this, no doubt, is a great pity; but I shall, at any rate, be able to furnish some little-known information and facts.

As we are aware, Auber at first busied himself with music only as an amateur. His father, himself an amateur painter, at the head of a print-selling business, which appeared flourishing, had brought him up somewhat in the style of a fine gentleman, quietly allowing him to lead a life of leisure and *far niente*, divided between the pleasures of the world and some trifling efforts at musical composition, which enabled him to make an agreeable figure in high society, where his natural grace and fertile mind caused him to be received as a distinguished guest. I believe that Cherubini knew the two Aubers, father and son, at the Academic Society of the Children of Apollo, where all three were admitted together, in 1806, on the re-organization of that agreeable artistic body. When, two years later, in 1808, at the invitation of the Prince and Princess de Caraman, Cherubini went to Chimay, he again met Auber, who was the favourite of the house, and it was there especially that an affectionate familiarity sprang up between them, thoroughly paternal on the part of Cherubini, who used to thou-and-thee Auber, and treat him somewhat as his son. It strikes me forcibly that the first lessons—or, rather, the first advice—of the author of *Lodoiska* to the future author of *La Muette*, must have dated from that epoch. Who would have thought, on seeing them then, that both, one after the other, would be Directors of the Conservatory!

However, Auber continued to serve art merely as a passionate dilettante, and to cultivate it only for his amusement. It is true that he wrote at Chimay a little opera which was very favourably received in the circle of fashionable amateurs there; it is true, also, that he brought out at the Opéra-Comique a little work, *Le Séjour militaire*, which obtained a pleasing success; but all this did not induce him actively to embrace a career, which, it is said, somewhat frightened him. A melancholy event and its consequences changed the conditions of his existence. His father died, and, very far from leaving him a fortune, as everyone expected would be the case, bequeathed him only a few debts and affairs in

a state of great confusion, the prosperity he had enjoyed being simply apparent. Greatly perplexed, Auber did not know what course to pursue. In his embarrassment, he went to Cherubini, to whom he explained his position, and whose advice he sought. "What is to be done?" he said.—"What is to be done?" replied Cherubini. "The matter is very simple. You are a musician; you have ideas; work!"—"Work!" answered Auber. "That is very easily said; but I am not accustomed to it, and it is not much to my taste."—"Very well," said Cherubini, smiling, "then throw yourself out of the window!" This prospect did not appear very agreeable to Auber, who made an expressive grimace. He ended, however, by resigning himself to labour, begging Cherubini to assist him in finishing an education which he himself considered insufficient and incomplete. It was, then, agreed between them that Auber should go regularly through a course of counterpoint, which would put him in a position to write purely and give him the confidence he wanted in himself. At that period, Auber was about thirty-five years of age, and it required a certain amount of moral courage for him to follow his old friend's advice; we know whether he had cause to repent having done so! As for Cherubini, it was with thoroughly affectionate conscientiousness and care that he charged himself with the future of his new "pupil," and rendered him the same service that, more than fifteen years previously, he had rendered Boieldieu. Auber was always profoundly grateful, and, a very long time afterwards, used complacently to show the little table which he had asked Cherubini to give him, and at which, two or three times a week, they both sat down to work, the one as master, the other as scholar.

With regard to Halévy, the feeling he experienced for him who had been his master and always remained his model, was one of devotion, admiration and boundless affection. Halévy was very young when he first became acquainted with Cherubini, my authority being M. Léon Halévy, who, in the touching notice he consecrated to his brother, informs us that it was in 1811, when only twelve years old, that Halévy was admitted into Cherubini's class of composition at the Conservatory; one thing certain is that it was in 1816 that Halévy, first entering the list at the Institute, carried off the second "Grand Prix de Rome," which commenced the series of his latest scholastic successes, and that he already felt for his master the veneration he never ceased to manifest. In 1820, being commissioned to write, on the occasion of the Duke de Berry's assassination, a "De Profundis," which was performed in the Israelitish Temple, he published it with the dedication: "Dedicated to Cherubini by F. Halévy, Member of the Conservatory."†

Halévy was one of the familiar friends of Cherubini's house. The old composer treated him as one of his own children and thoroughly reciprocated the tender affection of which he was the constant object on the young man's part. Mme Cherubini, likewise, considered him almost as a son; at whatever moment he presented himself, he was kindly received by her and her husband, and very naturally formed an attachment to young Salvador Cherubini, living with him and his sisters on a footing of perfect good-fellowship. He was not however safe, for all that, from Cherubini's habitual sudden outbursts, and disagreeable remarks. When his nerves were excited, Cherubini studied him no more than others, so that Halévy somewhat chagrined at the unexpected sallies, would exclaim in a tone of affectionate reproach: "Oh! M. Cherubini, how can you talk like that to me, who would do everything in the world to save you the shadow of an annoyance!" They would then soon make it up. As for Mme Cherubini, when subsequently work and business necessarily caused Halévy's visits to be less frequent, she reproached him with his neglect, and complained of his long absences, but was always most happy when she saw him again, and found him still affectionate and as demonstrative as ever.

One fact will prove the attachment Cherubini felt for Halévy and the esteem in which he held the latter's talent. When Boieldieu died in 1834, Cherubini asked the Academy of Fine Arts to render a just act of homage to this great artist by postponing for six months the election of his successor, adding, with the blunt frankness which formed part of his character, that there was another reason why the delay should be voted, namely: that

† At that period, Halévy, despite his being so young, had for several years been Professor of Solfeggio at the Conservatory.

* The letters Cherubini received at the Conservatory were the objects of most particular attention on the part of his secretary, A. de Beauchêne, also a great autograph-collector, who, thanks to his correspondence, formed an extremely interesting and very numerous artistic collection. As this was sold and dispersed after his death, no traces are left at the present day of the correspondence addressed to Cherubini as Director of our great school of music.

Halévy was writing *La Juive* and that in the interim it would be played. He reckoned on the success of this work, and hoped that, in consequence, he should see Halévy sitting in the chair once occupied by Boieldieu.† The Academy voted the requested delay, but, when the day of election arrived, Reicha was elected, despite Cherubini's efforts, by a majority of a few votes over Halévy.§ It is hardly necessary to say what a heavy sorrow Cherubini's death, a few years afterwards, was for Halévy.

"At one blow," says his brother, "he lost a master, a father, and a friend. I can still see him bending beneath the weight of his threefold grief, holding with Auber one of the corners of the pall as they proceeded from the Faubourg Poissonnière to the Church of St Roch. Large tears were coursing down his cheeks, and, at each roll of the funeral drums, at each plaint of the instruments singing the sublime *Requiem* which accompanied the great artist's remains, he staggered as though struck to the heart."

The fact is, Halévy seemed to lose something of himself when he saw the old master, who had always been for him so sure a guide, so wise a counsellor, so devoted, so faithful, and so disinterested a friend, pass away! It was then that he conceived the thought of paying him homage worthy of him and worthy of his genius, and it is in the moving pages bearing the stamp of filial piety which he consecrated somewhat later to Cherubini that we can measure the whole extent of the affection he felt for him who was the noble and austere support of his youth and early efforts. I refer to the notice, unfortunately never finished, from which I have already quoted some fragments, and which he published in the *Moniteur des Arts*. The reader will see what a fine portrait he traced in the very first lines, and with what a sure hand he portrayed Cherubini physically and morally:

"At the moment I write these lines, three years have passed over the tomb of Cherubini. It was on the 15th March, 1842, that he succumbed, bowed down by years, but struggling courageously against death, as up to that supreme day he had struggled courageously against old age, which had, in consequence, respected him. He had preserved all his energy of will, all his distinctness of judgment, all his clearness of intelligence. Strong, and possessing a young and vigorous mind, the octogenarian felt himself the equal of the men about him, who had not, in most cases, attained or passed maturity; he would scarcely acknowledge their right to be younger than himself, and in his pride, the term: old man, was distasteful to him; it seemed to conceal a snare. Simultaneously with this term, however careful one might be and whatever the praise with which it was decorated, there appeared for him feebleness, decadence, and men's pity, and he revolted against it. He accepted nothing of old age save the deference it brings with it; for him, years meant authority. But let not any one be deceived: under apparent pride there lay concealed a thorough sentiment of modesty which sprang from the instinct of preservation and proper appreciation of himself. It was the fear, always awake in him, of seeing the noble faculties of his mind deteriorate and diminish. He repelled old age out of pride, the cause of his force and resistance. His clear-sighted genius kept watch with too much zeal and inquietude for him not to perceive the enemy's persevering attacks, and not to feel its cold blows, knowing very well he would be vanquished the day on which he was not the stronger. Men of this stamp, who esteem naught in life but intelligence, live on fighting to the end, and die fully armed. 'I am beginning to get old,' he said to me one day. He was then more than eighty. These words, which would have been commonplace coming from other lips, struck me grievously proceeding from his, and filled me with sadness. I saw in them the presentiment and symptom of approaching dissolution. For me his death began on that day. Three months later he was no more.

"His life was therefore exempt from the period of trouble and enfeeblement in which the faculties are obscured and the gleams of the soul extinguished, a slow and painful state of transition, during which death is installed. He spared his friends this sad spectacle, sadder than ever when the fall of a superior mind is involved. One might almost fancy that the noble Muse whom the brush of Ingres imagined and placed by the Composer's side, sustained him, down to the last day with her vigorous hand and preserved him from the peril surrounding vulgar lives."

(To be continued.)

† V. F. Halévy, *sa vie et ses œuvres*, by Leon Halévy.

§ Reicha died at the end of a year, and Halévy was then elected.

|| V. F. Halévy, *sa vie et ses œuvres*.

A FRAGMENT.*

Hast seen the primrose, wet with dew,
Peep from its bed at early morn?
Hast marked the timid violet blue;
The poppy blushing midst the corn?
The modest mien of moorland sedge—
Some more of this, please, Dr Bledge.

'Tis sweet to rest at summer's eve
And list to Philomel's refrain;
When balmy gales their fragrance leave
And one we love trips down the lane—
Reclining neath th' encinct'ring hedge—
Encinct'ring's good—eh, Dr Bledge?

My love is fair; her cheek so soft
Is dight with dimples, and her voice
Is like the love-sick winds that waft
The soulful sounds of summer joys.
We sat athwart the mountain ridge—
(Exerciating!—Dr Bledge.)

H. E. D.

* All rights reserved. (All right.—Dr Bledge.)

CONCERTS.

BOW AND BROMLEY INSTITUTE.—A concert was given at this Institute on Monday evening, Sept. 17, the vocalists being M^{me} Clara West, Miss Lottie West, Messrs Bevan Jones and Frederick Bevan, with the St Paul's Glee Union; solo pianist, Miss Ettie Wieland; accompanist, Mr Arthur Dorey. Several "encores" were deservedly obtained by M^{me} and Miss West, Mr Bevan, and Miss Wieland. The concert was a musical success, although the attendance was not quite so numerous as could be desired, considering that the proceeds were for a charitable purpose.

MOORE AND BURGESS MINSTRELS.—After eighteen years without once closing the doors, with fathers who went to see them as boys, and still go to laugh at their jokes—venerables, perhaps, yet somehow other having fresh savour—the Moore and Burgess Minstrels on Monday night celebrated their anniversary by introducing new sketches, new songs, original dances, and the oddest eccentricities. "Fun without vulgarity" were the words used by Mr Moore in describing the entertainment, and in making allusion to the circumstance that the troupe are entering on their nineteenth year. Nor could he have used an apter phrase, for few are the places where a more agreeable evening can be spent than in St James's Hall. The very critical might pronounce the music vapid, the songs watery, and the jests old friends in novel guise, but the audiences who visit the Minstrels night after night are not of the very critical sort—they assemble for hearty laughter and to listen to sweetly-sung melodies. More remarkable is the continuousness of the amusement than the popularity itself. Many can remember the introduction of the negro minstrel entertainment, and, though it found great favour throughout the country, there were not many who would have predicted that it would establish here a permanent home. It has done so, and that only with the most judicious management. Mr Moore recalled the time when the company consisted of seven performers, and when an entertainment was given which would "now cause people to leave their seats." Not without pathos did he refer to the fact that from his "bones-corner" he had seen the bright young faces of girls who had grown up to womanhood and motherhood. The troupe was there, true, but not the troupe they first saw. Four managers, admired in their day, had passed away, and singers once popular were no more. But as with the House of Commons, so with them; new blood might be introduced, but they were still the Moore and Burgess Minstrels. If a programme so strong as that presented on Monday night be oft repeated, the company may fairly hope to realize the wish expressed by their chief, not only to reach a thirty-ninth anniversary, but a jubilee. The customary "first part" of the entertainment is divested of anything like threadbareness. The sentimental songs are pathetic and not mawkish, the comic songs truly comic, and the dialogue between the precise President and "Bones" or Tambourine of the racist. In the chorus singing the boys' voices are heard with remarkable effect, especially in Sir Henry Bishop's "Tramp Chorus." Something about *Nothing*; or, *the Rain of Terror* is a very laughable and

sensational sketch, and the request that the audience do not leave their seats till the shower of rain is more humorous than necessary.
—D. L. R.

PROVINCIAL.

LEEDS.—The enormous audience which assembled in the Victoria Hall, attracted chiefly by the announcement of the reopening of the organ, evinced perfect satisfaction with the improved quality of the instrument. The programme afforded ample scope for exhibiting its power and completeness. Dr Spark gave three organ solos. The first of these, Handel's Concerto in G minor, is regarded as the finest of its author's compositions for the organ, and was twice played at the recent Handel Festival by Mr Best. On this occasion the organist added a *cadenza*, in which the subjects of the concerto were skilfully introduced. A feature of the concert was an *andante* in A flat and *allegro* in F, from a fantasia in F major, "composed for this occasion by Dr Spark, and dedicated to his friend Dr E. J. Hopkins." The composition consists of three movements, but the last was omitted by reason of its length. The composition very creditably represents Dr Spark's fanciful treatment of organ pieces, and the effect which it produced on the audience ought to have gratified him both as composer and performer. The third organ solo was of the French school—Battiste's *Angelic Voices*, two *andantes* in E flat and A flat. This is one of those pieces which needs but repetition to ensure for it as much popularity as the majority of Battiste's works. The vocal music was highly successful. Miss Fanny Bristow—announced as a soprano of the Manchester concert—delighted the audience in Haydn's "With verdure clad," and Piatti's song "Awake, awake," to which the violoncello *obbligato* was added by the organist; while Mr W. Fisher Heath, a young tenor, created a favourable impression with the same composer's "In native worth." Mr. Dodds also added to the vocal entertainment. The concert was attended by the Mayor, the Town Clerk, and other representatives of the Corporation. Why did Dr Spark omit his accustomed notes to the programme on this occasion? They were too amusing and instructive to be dispensed with.—*Leeds Mercury*, Sept. 11, 1883.

MALVERN—ORGAN RECITAL.—On Thursday, September 13th, Mr. D. Hemingway, F.C.O., organist and choirmaster of Tewkesbury Abbey Church, played at the Priory Church the following compositions to an appreciative audience:—Preludio and Intermezzo, Sonata in E flat minor (Rheinberger); Allegretto Grazioso in D (Berthold Tours); Fantasia in F minor (Brosig); Meditation in A (Guilmant); Allegro Moderato in C (Smart); Offertoire in A flat (Battiste); Fantasia on Mendelssohn's Volkslied (Hepworth); Allegretto in A (Boyton Smith); Festal March in C (Hemingway).

BRIGHTON.—Offenbach's *La Vie*, with an English libretto by Mr H. B. Farnie, was produced at the Theatre on Monday night with moderate success. The opera, nevertheless, will be performed every night next week. The performers were Mr Alexander Henderson's "newly organized Avenue Theatre Company," who were all more or less efficient. At the Aquarium on Monday morning, Miss Adelina de Lara, a very youthful pianist, played Mendelssohn's Concerto in D minor to the satisfaction of a large audience; and in the evening Mdme Alice Barth's opera company, consisting of Mdme Barth, Misses Louise Lye and Isa Marsden; Messrs Dudley Thomas, Wotherspoon and B. P. Sutton, gave Victor Massé's *Les Noces de Jeannette*, under the title of *Haste to the Wedding*, and an operetta entitled *The Nabob's Pickle* by Mr and Mrs F. Corder. The Promenade Concerts given by the band of the 4th Dragoon Guards continue their successful career at the Pavilion.

SIGNOR BEVIGNANI left London on Monday to fulfil his duties as conductor at the Imperial Italian Opera House, St Petersburg. He contemplates producing three new operas, viz., *Richard the Third*, by Salvayre; *Nero*, by Rubinstein; and *Aldona* (*I Litvani*), by Ponchielli.

MISS EMILIE LEICESTER.—Among the recent arrivals from the United States may be mentioned that of this lady, who enjoys a high reputation as a teacher of dramatic elocution among our Transatlantic cousins. She has been extremely successful in preparing aspirants for the stage, and many of the most popular American actresses, such as Maud Granger, Louise Pomeroy, Adele Belgard, and others, were her pupils. It may not be uninteresting to some of our fair subscribers to know that Miss Leicester, who intends to remain in this country—for some considerable time, at least—has devoted particular attention to the histrionic training of ladies about to follow an operatic career.

A LAUREATE'S LOG.

(*Rough Weather Notes from the New Berth-day Book.*)

MONDAY.

If you're waking, please don't call me, please don't call me, Currie dear,
For they tell me that to-morrow t'wards the open we're to steer!
No doubt, for you and those aloft, the maddest, merriest way:
But I always feel best in a bay, Currie, I always feel best in a bay!

TUESDAY.

Take, take, take?—
What will I take for tea?
The thinnest slice—no butter,
And that's quite enough for me!

WEDNESDAY.

It is the little roll within the berth
That by-and-by will put an end to mirth,
And, never ceasing, slowly prostrate all!

THURSDAY.

Let me alone! What pleasure can you have
In chaffing evil? Tell me, what's the fun
Of ever climbing up the climbing wave?
All you, the rest, you know how to behave
In roughish weather! I, for one,
Ask for the shore—or death, dark death—I am so done!

FRIDAY.

Twelve knots an hour! But what am I?
A poet, with no land in sight,
Insisting that he feels "all right"
With half a smile—and half a sigh!

SATURDAY.

Comfort? Comfort scorned of lubbers! Hear this truth the Poet roar,
That a sorrow's crown of sorrows is remembering days on shore.
Drug his soda, lest he learn it when the Foreland gleams a spec
In the dead unhappy night, when he can't sit up on deck!

SUNDAY.

Ah! you've called me nice and early, nice and early, Currie dear!
What? Really in? Well, come, the news I'm precious glad to hear;
For though in such good company I willingly would stay—
I'm glad to be back in the bay, Currie, I'm glad to be back in the bay!

Punch.

TWO ARTICLES.

(*From the "St Cecilia Magazine."*)

NO. 1.

"COLOMBA."

BY J. ARTHUR BLAIRIE.

Mr Mackenzie's new opera, given on the 9th April at Drury Lane Theatre by Mr Carl Rosa's company, met with distinguished success. It is of happy augury for its future career and ultimate place in dramatic music that its reception has not been characterized by an unanimity of complacent praise, which is ever the lot, in these days, of mediocrity. Like all good work, it has already provoked not a little opposition as well as the warmest appreciation. To Mr Mackenzie, who is doubtless acquainted with the history of music, this should be an encouragement. There are always certain critics whose first desire is to label a new work, to classify it, to trace its genesis *ab ovo*, and identify it with some school. If the work should prove colourless, or even if it should be imitative of the masters they worship, it is hailed with admiration; if, on the other hand, it unhappily manifests, however slightly, the influence of a heterodox school, they visit it with their fullest opprobrium. In the same sense that the king can do no wrong, prejudice, we know, does not exist in the lofty mind of the critic. Unfortunately the gregarious nature of man is not merely physical; his mental habit partakes of this nature; he lives, and thinks, and utters his opinions, in the sweet security of a fold, with the natural result that the inspiration of prejudice is as the breath of his nostrils. The critic alone is exempt from this infirmity. His utterances, however wanting in breadth, are invariably convictions, more or less stable. He inhabits

the lofty uplands of contemplative thought, and takes in all Art with "an easy span," expressing the judgment of pure reason. This view of the critic's vocation is, perhaps, trite and familiar. It is a pity, however, that he is sometimes tempted from his pure serene into the vexed arena of human interests, of whose passions he partakes, and ceases to remember his august abode. It is out of place here to attempt to reconcile the divergencies of Mr Mackenzie's critics. The possibility of their reconciliation, or at least the common source of their origin, may be perceived after a perusal of M. Zola's essay on the impotence of criticism. They are curious, certainly. One writer, for instance, discovers a likeness between Mr Mackenzie's melodies and those of Mozart. Another finds the subordination of the vocal parts to an elaborate and heavily scored instrumentation a source of distress. The truth is, that Mr Mackenzie's melodies are like Mozart's only in the sense that all melody worthy of the name must be like Mozart's. It possesses both lyrical spontaneity and freshness. As for the score, it is just what might be expected from a musician who has a knowledge of the resources of the orchestra. The spirit of *modernité* pervades it. But this field of rather barren speculation must be abandoned for the more pleasurable consideration of the work itself.

The libretto of *Colomba* is written by Mr Hueffer, and founded on Prosper Mérimée's romance. It cannot be said to reflect the spirit of the original. Mérimée's wit and vivacity, his causticity and cynicism, and, above all, the brilliant distinction of his style are entirely unrepresented in Mr Hueffer's book. On the other hand Mr Hueffer has dealt skilfully and effectively with the chief incidents and situations of the novel. In the original, *Colomba* is better adapted to the form of Opéra Comique than that of Dramatic Opera, and the librettist has found it necessary to seriously interfere with Mérimée's plan and to add a *dénouement* of a highly melodramatic character. Both in libretto and romance the *motif* is revenge; when this is consummated Prosper Mérimée's story ends. In the libretto this, the original *dénouement*, is reached in the *finale* of the third act; but Mr Hueffer has chosen to imperil his climax by an addition to the tragic element in the death of *Colomba* in the fourth act. This is unhappy and inartistic; for if the *motif* of revenge is of sufficient interest and power in itself—as we think it most certainly is—it required no subsidiary interest. As it is, the death of *Colomba* detracts from the force of the true climax. It is singular to observe, however, that we find in the fourth act Mr. Mackenzie's most characteristic music. In *Colomba* the composer has discarded the overture and introduces his opera with a short prelude. It is constructed with singular ability, the leading motives of the work being successively indicated, and eventually elaborated, in agreement with the action of the drama. It is brilliantly instrumented, the sense of colour and the discriminative play of light and shade being very remarkable throughout. It was received with enthusiasm and encored. The scene then opens on the Market Place of Ajaccio, with a chorus of the market folk, of the most enjoyable and delightful vivacity. Its delicious sense of the charm of open-air life, with its buoyancy and felicity, baffles description. Underlying the bright, clear joyance of this chorus runs a dance rhythm southern in character, the two being worked together with striking effect. Savelli, a brigand, and his daughter, Chilina enter, and the former relates the circumstances of the murder of *Colomba*'s father. Here Chilina gives the "Vocero," a song improvised by *Colomba* on the occasion of the murder, when she swears vengeance. From this "Vocero" is deduced the chief of the leading motives of the opera and it is always associated with *Colomba*, or with the idea of revenge. It is not necessary to dilate on the beauty of this lovely melody, for its popularity is ensured. It is not so easy, however, to give any adequate idea of its importance in the opera, or how the revenge motive is again and again heard with an infinite variety of invention. Chilina is proceeding to finish her song when she is interrupted by the arrival of the Count de Nevers, his daughter Lydia, and Orso della Rebbia who has become enamoured of the young lady. A beautiful duet ensues between the lovers, at the conclusion of which *Colomba* enters, clothed in black and riding on a mule. Orso is about to embrace his sister, when she starts from him overpowered with grief. She recalls her vow to him and urges his duty of revenge, while Lydia declares her horror and her resolution to forsake him if he shed the blood of his enemy, and a passionate scene follows. Addressing the villagers, *Colomba* assures them that Orso will avenge the death of her father, whose murderer they well know. To this the chorus respond with the name of her enemy, the Barracini, giving the motive always heard in connection with that sinister event. *Colomba* here takes up the "Vocero" where it had been interrupted and with ever growing passion calls on Orso for revenge. The people shout in tempestuous reply, "Vendetta." This incident is one of the most transcendent effects in the opera and leads to a finale of immense dramatic power, in

which the various conflicting passions of all concerned are finely expressed.

In the second act we are transported to the village of Pietranera. The dwellings of the Barracini and of their enemies, the Della Rebbia, occupy opposite sides of a green. *Colomba* is seen at the foot of a tree as if exhausted by her passion. She gives expression to her hopes and fears in some very characteristic phrases, and then enters the house. The ballet music that follows demands notice, not merely for the complexity of its rhythms, but for the admirable lucidity with which their diverse natures are expressed. The chorus in which the village girls hail one of their companions, "Queen of May," is a well-known chant usually associated in England with grace after public dinners. This is effectively harmonised and sung in unison; and the manner in which it is subsequently introduced in the dance is highly piquant. The jocund rhythm of the "saltarello" and the solemn dignity of the *chorale* blend in the most picturesque fashion, and give a good effect of local colour to the scene. The entrance of the Count and Orso, with the two Barracini, leads to an attempt at reconciliation on the part of the first-named. This is expressed in a quartet (entirely unaccompanied) which is, perhaps, the most individual number in the act. It possesses much grace and suavity. The act of reconciliation is about to be cemented when *Colomba* appears and separates the Barracini from Orso. Savelli appears and convinces Orso that his father was murdered by the Barracini, and the opposing parties shelter themselves in their respective houses under cover of their armed adherents. The *finale* of this act is wanting in emphasis; the recital of Savelli is too long, and the final defiance of the opposing parties is too unimportant to form a dramatic situation.

The delicate melodic grace of the prelude prepares the hearer for the opening scene of the third act. Its theme is an old Corsican ballad (which Chilina afterwards introduces) combined with the Barracini motive. Orso is seen seated by the roadside of a valley near Pietranera, and armed with a double-barrelled gun. He indulges in a tender reverie, the object of which is Lydia. This leads to the Corsican love-song, "Will she come from the hill," a melody of notable character, at the conclusion of which Chilina is heard singing the ballad before alluded to, "So he thought of his love," one of those melodies that haunt the ear with a sweet insistent sadness. For Orso it is full of melancholy boding. Starting to meet Lydia, he encounters Giuseppe Barracini. An altercation follows, during which the brother of Giuseppe, at a signal from him, fires at Orso from behind a wall and wounds him in the arm. Orso, however, uses his gun to good effect, killing both the Barracini with his two barrels. After Savelli and Chilina have carried off the wounded man, a powerful *finale* is reached. The priests enter and sing a requiem for the dead men, while *Colomba*'s outburst of triumphant exultation and her cry of "Vendetta" mingles with their solemn chant. The scene is highly wrought.

The last act is a little tame, from a dramatic point of view; but the music is more noble in aim and accomplishment than any preceding it. The duet between Orso and Lydia, on their meeting, is gracefully written, and characterized by tenderness and delicate feeling. A second duet, resulting from the former, is a masterly composition. This number, "Say of love, shall he change or alter?" is certainly comparable with nothing that has hitherto been produced in English opera for sustained passion and dramatic force (!). The sudden change from Lydia's half-reproachful mood to an outburst of rapturous exaltation is indescribably impressive. The transition is so thorough that joy is almost pain, and through the impassioned flood of melody, which acquires eloquence with every impetuous phrase, there is a suggestion of past anguish. *The triumph of love has scarcely ever been expressed in music with such force and fire.* The *finale* of the opera is a chorus, which takes the form of a prayer for the dying *Colomba*, who has been mortally wounded by the soldiers sent to arrest Orso—written in Wagner's grandiose style, and recalling the earlier work of that master in its peculiar sonority and the progression of its phrasing.

Colomba is the first English opera in which Wagner's elaborate system of leading-motives is introduced. Mr Mackenzie uses the *Leit-motif* not merely as a means of characterization or identity. The chief of the leading-motives in *Colomba* are subjected to considerable elaboration and a variety of combinations, and they are vitalizing elements in the opera and essential to its structure. The "Vocero," or revenge-motive, for instance, undergoes almost as much metamorphosis as the principal *idée fixe* of Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique*. It would be unjust on this ground, to assert that *Colomba* is a work of the German school of music-drama and its author a disciple of Wagner. Yet it has been already affirmed, on

* Such preposterous nonsense as this is quite enough to make anxious critics shake in their shoes and wag their heads.—Dr Bridge.

this ground alone, that *Colomba* is not an English opera. Balfe's operas are far more Italian in character than English, yet people would wax indignant if it were suggested that *Satanella* and *The Bohemian Girl* are not English operas. The influence of Wagner is undoubtedly perceptible in Mr Mackenzie's work, but not to the extent that would denationalize it. It may be conceded that the final chorus would not, perhaps, have been written if *Lohengrin* did not exist; and also that in his orchestration Mr Mackenzie frequently produces his broad effects of sonority and colour by following Wagner's method. Admitting this, there remain the numbers already cited that are of the highest individuality, and these, after all, are as the vital organs of the work. It would be absurd to declare *Colomba* is not an English opera as to deny that some of Wagner's works are not German because the influence of Berlioz is to be detected in them. What is most characteristic, most worthy of commendation, because most artistic in *Colomba*, are the product of Mr Mackenzie's genius. All those qualities, in fact, that combine to make *Colomba* the most important and most representative English opera that has yet been produced in England (!) proceed from its composer, and are, beyond cavil or sophistry, rare and distinct enough to be welcomed by all students of music. Mr Mackenzie's genius for melody and his command of the orchestra have been recognized so warmly and unanimously that it may be pertinently asked what is there in his use of the *leit-motif* that is so irritating to certain critics? It is not even asserted that it is unskillfully applied in *Colomba*. Whether or not Mr Mackenzie abandons the system of leading motives, his opera is a work of such merit and distinction that it awakens sanguine hopes not only for his own future but for the future of English opera.

[Evidently not the article of a French critic, Dr Blackie will answer for that.—Dr Blinze.]

No. 2.

GOUNOD'S REDEMPTION.

BY AN ENGLISH MUSICIAN.

Sufficient time has now elapsed to enable the musical world to assess the merits of Gounod's chief essay, *The Redemption*, perhaps the most disappointing work of modern times, and which it may be at once said, is a stagey imitation of Bach's sublime *Passions Musik* from a Roman Catholic point of view. No work, on an important scale, has been so urgently recommended to the country. The composer himself disarms us by saying that we are not to glance at it from an old-fashioned oratorio standard. He describes it as a "Trilogy." It is even more than a triangular arrangement, having a prologue, and starts with that misty foundation of matter, "Chaos," tortuously begotten of ascending and descending chromatic gamuts played together, making us all regret the archaic picture at the commencement of the *Creation* by that departed master, Haydn, who always sat down to work in his best finger-rings—so the biographers tell us—after marrying the daughter of a Vienna wig-maker who had befriended him in early life. Beyond a doubt, no musical work in our times has been so sumptuously paid for as Gounod's *Redemption* (£4,000 it is said); but it is plainly to be seen that the proprietors don't intend that capital to lie idle. Music type handbooks are dispensed at double the cost of the extinct oratorios, although the inside contents weigh about one half. As to the indispensable separate orchestral and vocal parts, a friend discloses that a mysterious regulation shrouds their use. They are not in the market at all. He attended a "rendering" of the work in the metropolis lately, and, by permission of the conductor, was allowed upon the orchestra at the conclusion. This, however, would not have been conceded had the active librarian not been disposed of by a stray tap from the director's rod of office, accidentally administered during the concluding bit of psalmody—a short combined piece in what the tonic-sol-fa people would call "six-four" time. On the gentleman approaching the desk of the substantial player who undertook the "celestial harp" part, he read the following warning on the music cover:—"This part is the property of * * * and must not be used on any occasion without their permission." The full score, as it is termed, being also jealously guarded, connoisseurs must trust to the drums of their ears and the crumbs of comfort afforded by the octavo type copy before alluded to. Following the example of the Teutonic Wagner, Gounod is his own Laureate, and tells us he wrote the words when lodged in Rome at the Academy of France, situate on that favourite promenade of the modern Romans, the Pincian Hill.

What the text may be like in the original cannot be hazarded,—what it is through the medium of an uncouth and unmusical translation we certainly do know; such doggerel has rarely met the eye in works of a sacred character. The entire concoction bears remarkable likeness to the Biblical "dramas" in which the younger

members of our Sunday Schools take a demure delight. With a proviso. Well known hymns of the Latin Church are cunningly interlarded and sung to the dreary strains of the Roman Plain-Chant, as the "Vexilla Regis" and "Stabat Mater," the latter with a noteworthy reading which may be commended to Anglican Clergymen who contemplate improving their congregations by a performance of the work. The lately started London *Musical Review* prophesies that the *Redemption* will become a "stock piece" at provincial festivals; evidently alluding to the cathedral meetings in the English midland counties. It is to be hoped not. Gounod's attempts at choral writing are of the most humble description, resembling brief "part-songs" and without the slightest address in the march of the inner parts. Out of a series of more than twenty short choruses, almost all are in simple counterpoint, note against note, syllable to syllable, as in operatic music; and on such *pabulum* as this, our trained bodies of singers are invited to exist! Are then the wonderful pages of Bach's *Passions Musik*, as well as the Choral splendours in the oratorios of Handel and Mendelssohn mere sound and fury, signifying nothing? It may be that the composer devoutly wishes to contribute in winning this country back to the "Roman Obedience" by his pious hymns, sung to a nursing organ accompaniment. They have not it is true, the "gush" common to the hymn-tunes of Barnby, nor the cloying fervour of those by Dykes among our native harpers, but it is doubtful whether M. Gounod will bring many lambs into the Roman fold from the ranks of our choristers, who insist on being well cared for when making up their minds for a scientific shout in any large sacred work, and are hardly to be appeased by copious doses of meeting-house psalmody.

It would be unfair to dismiss the clerical translators without a sample: the Disciples here reply to the holy women—

"Though we fain would have believed you,
Some form surely has deceived you,
Some phantom seen in the night.
From trusting what you have told us
Lack of witness must withhold us:
We rely on hearing and sight."

It can hardly be said that these words fall grandly on the ear, and they are average specimens of the prevailing bathos. Another quotation has a strong flavour of *H.M.S. Pinafore*—the allusion is to our common progenitor, the primeval Adam—

"And he, placed in a land of abundance and beauty,
Lived a pure happy life under guidance of duty."

Surely such a subject demands grave and noble diction. In the art of marrying words to music, a new revelation is made as to the word "possession," usually accented on the second syllable; but in the first short chorus the translator regales himself by placing the accent on the *last*, and that to a note on the strongest musical accent known, viz., the first note in any time-bar. This offence against the quantities is carefully repeated a little farther on. Subsequently, the same word is set as we always hope to find it, therefore, both ways cannot be correct, even from a "precenting" point of view. To return to the music.

The impression after listening to Gounod's "*Ouvrage de ma Vie*" must be faithfully chronicled—it is one of dull monotony, nor does a second hearing dispel the uncomfortable feeling; the air-form of composition has almost been tabooed, while extreme and irritating weariness is caused by the endless sing-song of the narrators clinging with dreadful pertinacity to the two or three notes doled out to them by the composer, who frequently surrounds their utterances with humorous figures on accompanying violins, when not busy with his diminished discords. It was to be expected that such an expert in the art of instrumentation as Gounod would leave a powerful impress upon the orchestral details of his score; and this is undoubtedly the case; in fact, it may be predicted that a performance of the *Redemption*, without a fully-equipped band, is out of the question, and would hardly be undertaken or tolerated anywhere. From this cause, and the fragmentary character of the choral music, it cannot obtain vogue at those numerous singing-meetings where social groups of either sex, duly fortified with fiendly but chest-contracting "octavos," stand to their work round a well-thumped piano, and make night hideous in neighbouring areas. The influence of Wagner in Gounod's work is paramount, so we are all prepared for that baleful and pantomimic nostrum, a *leit-motif*, which accompanies all allusions to the Saviour, and here consists of a passage for the orchestra repeated *rosalia* fashion, i.e., a note higher each time, with a final cadence. The device of repeating short phrases in this manner is an infallible sign of creative decay, and is profusely employed; many chromatic orchestral passages, with ugly diminished harmonies, rise upon the ear "high, and ever higher," but exactly the reverse as to the artistic value of the procedure, which has long ago been condemned by the school-men. The orchestral figure

before alluded to—a dominant point of a few bars—has since been diverted from its purpose to do publisher's duty as a song, the translator supplying words under the title of *Power and Love*. More recently, a well-known singer who has joined the Roman communion attempts to accommodate this *leit-motif* (advertised as "typical of the Redeemer") to devout Latin words. It is much to be regretted that from the very outset the Saviour is introduced as one of the *dramatis personæ*, having many solo entrances assigned throughout. As a matter of notoriety, Beethoven's *Mount of Olives* and Spohr's *Calvary* were remodelled in this respect before a performance in England was permitted; and it is a curious aspect of the times to find responsible Anglican clergymen sanctioning a performance of the *Redemption* in well-known edifices without having this unseemly feature eliminated, not to mention others which plainly stamp the work as being more suitable to congregations who frankly own the Roman obedience. Owing to the undue prominence given to the orchestra by M. Gounod, a want of elevation of style is generally apparent. For instance, the passage given to the mocking Jewish priests, "Can he not save himself," is dangerously similar to the profane "Habanera" in *Carmen*. Again, the composer can hardly expect us to accept the theatrical strains of his march to Calvary as "typical" of the dead march of the ancient Romans? The portentous darkness during the Crucifixion affords excuse for a very sinuous orchestral movement, a "study in dissonances," and must have cost the composer a deal of midnight oil. In comparison with this "study," contrast the sublime effect of a few master-strokes in "He sent a thick darkness," from Handel's *Israel in Egypt*! The separation of groups of trumpet players at opposite wings of the orchestra, first practised by Berlioz and continued by Verdi with splendid effect in his "Requiem," has been followed by Gounod in the chorus, "Saviour of men," where the only two notes played easily lend themselves to changing harmonies. The opening passages of this movement for the horns are very suggestive of Weber's overture to *Der Freyschütz*, where the cadences for the instruments are much alike. In the symphony to the solo with chorus, "Ye mountains, ye perpetual hills," in E major, Gounod takes without compunction Mendelssohn's melodious theme from *St Paul*, "Be thou faithful unto death," for tenor, with violoncello *obbligato*, but hesitating to give the theme to the singer, it is relegated to the violins before the vocal entry.

It will be seen from this notice that a high place is not accorded to Gounod's sacred work. The composer, it is unquestionable, has done conspicuous service to musical art in its operatic and secular branches, but in essaying the highest form has not been successful. In conclusion it may be said that although the *Redemption* will keep a place during the special season in certain quarters, it is destined to fall into the desuetude which so rapidly overtook the composer's unfortunate wedding marches, produced to royal order; and the grounds for this estimate may thus be summarized:—(1) *Absence of sustained melodic interest*; (2) *Insignificant and trivial character of the choral music*; (3) *Negation of the air or song-form, superseded by tedious sing-song in a declamatory style, and destitute of melodious grace*; (4) *Undue prominence given to the orchestra throughout, surely contributing to a want of elevation in the music*. It remains to be seen whether the work will be accepted and utilized by the Roman Catholic Church abroad, a matter very problematical, as it is known that "orchestras" in sacred buildings are out of favour and generally discouraged in the chief cities of the continent—a remarkable sign of the times.

[Also this is evidently not the article of a French critic. M. Gounod will answer for that.—Dr Blügg.]

BERLIN.—The members of Stern's Gesangverein were to re-commence practice on the 17th inst. As already announced, the works performed this winter will probably be Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Schumann's *Paradies und die Peri*, Kiel's *Christus*, and Beethoven's *Solemn Mass*.

MEININGEN.—Opera is to be reintroduced at the Ducal Theatre, and an Italian company will give a series of performances in October. The Meiningeners cannot be blamed for at last temporarily supplying the place of their much vaunted dramatic company who are continually achieving successes every where except at Meiningen.

MUNICH.—The novelties during the present season at the Theatre Royal will be Carl Rheinthal's *Küchen von Heilbronn* and Ch. Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette*. There was an intention of adding Hector Berlioz's *Benvenuto Cellini*, but the management had to abandon it, in consequence, it is said, of the extravagant demands made by the French owner of the copyright. The so-called "revivals" will be Gluck's *Alceste*, Marschner's *Vampyr*, Mozart's *Titus* and *Così fan Tutte*, Schumann's *Genovefa*, Götz's *Widerspenstiger Zähmung*, and Halévy's *Mousquetaires de la Reine*.

MR IRVING AND THE EDINBURGH LYCEUM.

From the report in *The Era* of the proceedings in connection with the opening of the new Lyceum Theatre at Edinburgh, it will be seen that Mr Irving encountered an unexpected difficulty by the desertion of one of the heads of departments. The fact is that the master carpenter left the theatre at four o'clock, without giving the slightest notice of his intention, Mr Irving and the members of his company having themselves to do the necessary work.

At the close of the performance Mr Irving was loudly called for, and, in responding, said:

"LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—I am sure you believe me when I say to you that I am very glad to be back with you once more. The event of to-night irresistibly reminds me of an event which occurred some twenty-five years ago in Edinburgh, and in which I then took a part. That was the closing night of your old Theatre Royal—a theatre so associated with the traditions of the Scottish stage. To-night the event is a more cheerful one, and I am sure you will all congratulate my friend Howard on the success of his venture. Of course, ladies and gentlemen, we are very much indebted to you for your kind patience to-night. You have exhibited that, especially in the gallery, in a most remarkable manner, knowing, as I am sure you do, the difficulties we have had to contend with. That accounts for your very kind consideration towards us. You will be sorry to hear that our dilemmas were a little increased at the last moment by the head of one of the departments—and I think it a duty to mention a fact like that—deserting us in our hour of need at four o'clock; therefore we lost a great deal of assistance on that account. With such a delightful theatre as that which Mr Phipps has constructed, with an audience such as an Edinburgh audience is, and with a city such as Edinburgh is, to dwell in, I am quite sure of the future of those two young managers. I rejoice to find that our old friend Robert Wyndham's son is one of them. I am glad to find that Mr Howard has such an earnest fellow-worker as a partner. I am quite sure that his boat must sail freely both with wind and stream."

In response to loud calls for Howard and Wyndham these gentlemen again appeared on the stage and bowed their acknowledgments, after which, about midnight, the brilliant audience dispersed. Early in the evening large crowds filled the surrounding streets, and continued in position until the performances were over. Of these a large gathering waited at the stage-door, and Mr Irving and Miss Terry were received with shouts of applause as they drove off. Mr Howard was overwhelmed with personal congratulations during the evening, and received many telegrams from his professional brethren in various parts of the country wishing him every success in his new undertaking. Each visitor to the theatre received a special playbill, printed on fine paper, which had been designed by Mr G. R. Halkett, and lithographed by Messrs G. Waterston & Sons. The design includes medallion portraits of Mr Irving and Miss Terry, which surmount the cast, and figures stand on either side—one displaying the Union Jack and the other the Stars and Stripes. The programme is executed in old English style, and forms a worthy memento of the occasion. The comfort of the audience was studied in every possible way throughout the theatre, and Mr S. H. S. Austin, whose services as acting-manager we think Messrs Howard and Wyndham fortunate in having secured, was simply indefatigable in his endeavours to contribute in his peculiar sphere to the enjoyment of the visitors.

Mr John Payne Collier, the well-known Shakspearean critic and bibliographer, died on Monday at his residence, Riverside, Maidenhead, at the venerable age of 94. After being called to the Bar he became a law and Parliamentary reporter. While thus engaged he also devoted himself to literature, and in 1820 wrote *The Poetical Decameron*, the purport of which was to draw attention to our early dramatists, while in contributions to the magazines of the day he largely dealt with the same favourite topic. *The Poet's Pilgrimage* appeared in 1822, and this was at intervals followed by several other poetical and dramatic works. He sedulously devoted himself also to biographical research, and his *Bibliographical and Critical Catalogue* is of lasting value. For many years of his long and studious life he was devotedly attached to the memory, fame, and writings of Shakespeare, and wrote or edited many works on these subjects. Mr Collier was connected with several learned and antiquarian societies, and for many years he enjoyed a pension of £100 a year in recognition of his services to literature.—D. L. R.

WAIFS.

The report that Sir Michael Costa intended residing for a lengthened period abroad is incorrect. West Brighton, where he has leased a house, will be his future home—at any rate, for a time.

HENRY IRVING AND THE NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY.—The receipts of the London and North-Western Railway were recently helped to a substantial extent by the conveyance of Mr Henry Irving and his company from London to Glasgow. The number of persons composing the party was sixty. Some idea of the amount of baggage to be transported may be formed from the fact that ten luggage waggons were filled with more than 1,500 trunks, boxes, cases, baskets, and other packages of scenery, wardrobes, and stage properties. From Glasgow to Edinburgh, and thence to Liverpool, the whole party and their belongings are under the charge of the traffic managers at Euston.

A new theatre has been opened in Ancona. Signor Schira has returned from Italy. Mr Emanuel Aguilar has returned to town. Miss Madelina Cronin has returned from Paris. Mr and Mrs F. B. Jewson have returned to town. Mme Judic has accepted a starring engagement in Vienna. Herr Bilse commenced his concert season in Berlin on the 19th inst.

R. Wagner's *Lohengrin* is to be given next spring at Buenos Ayres.

Sig. Sieni's Italian opera-company will start for Mexico on the 8th October.

The Teatro Pagliano, Florence, will re-open this autumn with *Les Huguenots*.

F. Hermann, tenor, has been engaged for four years at the Stadt-theater, Cologne.

H. Bötel, the newly engaged tenor at the Hamburg Stadttheater, is becoming a great favourite there.

The French tenor Prévost is fulfilling a highly successful engagement at the National Theatre, Prague.

Ch. Lecocq's buffo opera, *Le Cœur et la Main*, has been successfully produced at Daly's Theatre, New York.

The Teatro dei Fiorentini, Naples, will be opened for opera somewhere about the end of the present month.

A new ballet, *Die Assasinen*, will be produced about the end of November at the Imperial Operahouse, Vienna.

Johannes Brahms has left Vienna, where he has lived for many years, and taken up his residence in Wiesbaden.

Miss Emma Thursby was to start on an extended tour to the Western States and California about the 15th inst.

Mlle Thérèse Adams, a pupil of Mme Marchesi's, has appeared successfully in Genoa as Amina in *La Sonnambula*.

M. Salvayre's *Richard III* will be included in the repertory of the coming season at the Italian opera, St Petersburg.

Mlle Teresina Tua and Herr R. Fischhof will take part in the second Gewandhaus Concert, Leipzig, on the 18th October.

A new ballet, *Amadiade*, by the well-known choreographer, Danesi, will be produced next season at the San Carlo, Naples.

Jan Gall, favourably known as the composer of various songs and part-compositions, has been appointed Town-Conductor in Cracow.

Mlle Amelie Heussner is engaged at the Ostend Theater, Berlin, and will make her first appearance there as Laura in *Der Bettelstudent*.

Herr Bausenain celebrates on the 1st October his 25th anniversary as a member of the operatic company at the Theatre Royal, Munich.

Mme Théo will shortly make her re-appearance in Paris as Mme Boniface, in a new opera of the same name, music by M. Lacombe.

Ambroise Thomas's *Hamlet* is in rehearsal at the Teatro Comunale, Bologna, Lhéris being the Melancholy Prince, and Mlle Lodi, Ophelia.

Herr Anton Hodeck, formerly director of the Court Theatres at Rudolstadt and Pymont, has been appointed director of the Stadt-theater, Berne.

The heirs of R. Wagner have lost their action against the Municipality of Leipzig for unauthorized performance of the composer's works.

Mme Marchesi having returned from her annual holiday, in the course of which she visited Carlsbad and Venice, has resumed her teaching in Paris.

Jery und Bätely, one-act opera, with libretto founded on Göthe's text, and music by Mme Ingeborg von Bronsart, will shortly be produced in Leipzig.

Mlle Laura Friedmann, after studying for some time in Paris under Mme Marchesi, has been engaged for three years at the Theatre Royal, Dresden.

The novelty with which the Court Theatre will open will be Mr Godfrey's adaptation of Mr Edmund Yates' novel entitled *Kissing the Rod*. It is to be called *Self*.

The St. James's Theatre, we may remind our readers, was opened for the season on Monday with the play of *Impulse*, which has not yet exhausted its popularity.

A new opera, *Donna Ines*, has been produced at the Politeama, Placenza. The music is by Luigi Ricci, son of the elder of the brothers Ricci, who wrote *Crispino e la Comare*.

The Teatro della Fenice, Venice, has been taken for the carnival season by Sig. Bartoli, who intends giving, among other operas, G. Bizet's *Carmen*, a novelty for the City of Gondolas.

The death is announced, at an advanced age, of the veteran actor, Junius Brutus Booth. He is best known to this generation as the father of the distinguished tragedian, Mr Edwin Booth.

August Pott, formerly Grand-Ducal *Capellmeister*, Oldenburg, Royal Danish "University Professor," member and honorary member of various musical societies, died recently at Gratz, aged 78.

It is now decided there shall be no Italian Opera-season at the Victoria-Theater, Berlin. Sig. Merelli's company will, it is true, visit the Prussian capital, but merely to give a few "operatic concerts" there.

OPERA BY TELEPHONE.—Gounod's *Faust*, which was performed by the Carl Rosa Opera Company at the Princess's Theatre, Manchester, on Wednesday night was heard simultaneously at Warrington through the medium of a telephone.

MUSICAL EXHIBITIONS.—The examinations for the Henry Smart Scholarship and the Sir Julius Benedict and Sims Reeves Exhibitions at Trinity College, London, took place on Tuesday, Sept. 18th when the Benedict Exhibition was awarded to Olive B. St Clair, of Wandsworth, and the Reeves Exhibition to Maud Lee (student of the College). The Examiners were Mr Humphrey J. Stark, Mus.B., Dr Gordon Saunders, Mr John Stedman, Mr Bradbury Turner, Mus.B., and Mr E. H. Turpin. The election for the Henry Smart Scholarship was postponed as no candidate of sufficient merit came forward.

DEATH OF MISS ORRIDGE.—We regret to announce the death of this young and popular contralto vocalist. Towards the middle of last month Miss Orridge joined her family at Guernsey for a short holiday, but two days afterwards she was seized with an illness which terminated fatally last Sunday. Miss Orridge was born in London, in 1856, and was a pupil of Senor Manuel Garcia, at the Royal Academy of Music, carrying off the bronze medal in 1876, the silver medal and Llewellyn Thomas gold medal for declamatory singing in 1877, and the certificate of merit, the Parepa Rosa gold medal, and the Christine Nilsson prize in 1878. She has since then enjoyed a high position as an oratorio and concert singer. Her funeral took place at Kensal Green Cemetery yesterday (Friday).

SACRED HARMONIC SOCIETY.—The prospectus is just issued for a series of six concerts at St James's Hall, to be followed by a *conversazione* at Prince's Hall, Piccadilly. The first concert will be on November 16, when Sir G. A. Macfarren's new oratorio *King David*, composed for the Leeds Festival, will be performed for the first time in London. Bach's Christmas Oratorio, Mendelssohn's "Walpurgis Night," and Gounod's *Redemption* are also to be included in the season's performances. Mr Charles Hallé resumes his position as conductor, and Mr W. H. Cummings as assistant conductor, but Sir Arthur Sullivan, under whose direction the oratorio is being produced at Leeds, will conduct *King David*, with Miss Mary Davies, Mme Patey; Messrs Lloyd and Santley as principal vocalists.

Mr Walter Macfarren has been paying a series of visits in Yorkshire, Flintshire, Somersetshire, and Cornwall, and is now winding up his summer holiday near the Land's End. John Gilpin, citizen of credit and renown, though on pleasure bent, had still a frugal mind; and our well-known pianist and talented composer while in the enjoyment of "rustic delights" has proved himself ready to play for the amusement of his friends, or to put on harness in the cause of charity. Thus on Thursday last, Sept. 20, he gave a pianoforte recital at Falmouth for the benefit of the Cornwall Home for Destitute Little Girls, and his appeal was liberally responded to by the gentry of the place, who warmly appreciated the rich musical treat provided for them. The programme comprised pieces from the works of Haydn, Beethoven, Chopin, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Sterndale Bennett, and Walter Macfarren himself.

MR GEORGE FORBES.—It is with regret that we announce the death of Mr George Forbes, who, for forty-five years, was organist at St. Mary's Church, Bryanston Square. The deceased gentleman was in his seventy-first year, and for some time previous to his death had been suffering from a complication of internal complaints, which terminated fatally on the morning of Tuesday last. It was not, however, until lately that his illness caused any anxiety to his friends, as he seemed as strong and hearty as ever. On Sunday, August 5th,—the induction day of the new Rector, the Rev. the Hon. Canon Leigh—after presiding at the organ, Mr Forbes complained of feeling very ill, and, at his request, two of his friends connected with the church saw him safely to his residence. After a rest of some days, Mr Forbes resumed his duties as organist, but on Sunday, the 26th ult., he had a relapse, and never again left his bed. The loss sustained by St Mary's will be very deeply felt, as both in and out the church deceased's genial nature and kindness of heart were well known and appreciated by a large circle of friends. Deceased, who was a widower, leaves two sons and two daughters.—*Marylebone Mercury*.

DION BOUCAULT.—It is reported that Mr Boucault is having built, at Wilmington, N.C., for his next starring tour, one of the largest and handsomest railway cars ever devised in this country. Unlike Mrs Langtry's, says the chronicler, this car is not for the star alone; the whole company will be housed in it. There are to be sleeping berths for eighteen people; a kitchen, with two French cooks, and accommodations for dining and wineing the entire party. Mr Boucault will be his own syndicate, and insure the car and its contents in the Accident Company. His intention is to charge each member of his troupe 25 dols. a week for board and lodging, table claret included, champagne, cigars, and washing extra. Of course he will pay salaries sufficiently liberal to justify the humblest utility man in expending 25 dols. a week for board and lodging. Mr Boucault has ciphered the whole business up, and calculates that, by importing his wines and buying his fish, meats, and groceries wholesale, he can clear enough each week to defray all the extra expenses of the car and leave him a considerable profit. The great actor-dramatist will thus be independent, not only of the local hotels, but also of the local theatres, for in case business should be bad at the theatre he can increase his profits from the car by cutting a few dishes out of the bills of fare and serving ordinary table claret. (Nothing is impossible to Dion.—*Dr Etüde*.)

BERNBURG.—Some time since, the Duke of Anhalt made this town a present of the theatre—which had been closed for years—repaired and decorated at a cost of 130,000 marks. The inhabitants now possess a handsome house, which is capable of accommodating eight hundred spectators, and in which the Ducal Company give occasional performances.

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| | Where'er you walk, from "Semele" | Handel | 43. | He shall feed His flock, from "Messiah" | Handel |
| 8. | My heart ever faithful (Mein gläubiges Herz frohlocket) Bach | | 44. | Quoniam tu solus (1788) | Vincenzo Righini |
| 9. | Andantino from 5th, and Andante from 4th Sonatas | Pleyel | 45. | Hallelujah Chorus from "Messiah" | Handel |
| 10. | The Hero's March | Mendelssohn | 46. | "Turn Thy face," "Then shall I teach," "I will magnify
Thee," from Anthems | J. Weldon |
| 11. | Quis est homo, from "Stabat Mater" | Rossini | 47. | The heavens are telling, from "Creation" | Haydn |
| 12. | Air et Chœur, from "La Dame Blanche" | Boieldieu | 48. | Andante and Allegretto from Violin Sonata in A major | Handel |
| 13. | Grande Marche Héroïque in C | F. Schubert | 49. | Slow Movement from Symphony (36) | Haydn |
| 14. | Grande Marche Héroïque in D | F. Schubert | 50. | Andante con Variazioni, from the Notturmo (Op. 34) | Louis Spohr |
| 15. | Overture, "Berenice" | Handel | 51. | Wie nahte mir der Schlummer | C. M. von Weber |
| 16. | Overture, "Sosarmes" | Handel | | Aria | The Comte de St. Germain |
| 17. | Overture, "Alcina" | Handel | 52. | Marche Solennelle (Op. 40) | F. Schubert |
| 18. | Gavotte from Overture, "Otho" | Handel | 53. | Adagio from the Notturmo (Op. 34) | Louis Spohr |
| 19. | La Carità | Rossini | 54. | Ave Maria, from "The Evening Service," Book 7 | Cherubini |
| 20. | Angels ever bright, and Pious orgies | Handel | 55. | Overture to "Samson," and Minuet (1742) | Handel |
| 21. | Ave Maria | F. Schubert | 56. | The arm of the Lord | Haydn |
| 22. | Aria. Circa A.D. 1700 | Antonio Lotti | 57. | Deh lascia o core, from "Astianatte" (1727) | Giovanni Buononcini |
| 23. | My soul thirsteth for God, Aria from 42nd Psalm. Mendelssohn | | 58. | Gloria in Excelsis, from Mass No. 2, in G | Schubert |
| 24. | Gloria in Excelsis, from Mass in C | Weber | 59. | Il pensier sta negli oggetti, Aria (1792) | Haydn |
| 25. | Fac ut portem, from "Stabat Mater" | Rossini | 60. | Gloria in Excelsis, from Twelfth Mass | Mozart |
| 26. | Pietà Signore, from Oratorio, "San Giovanni Battista" Stradella | | 61. | How lovely are the messengers | Mendelssohn |
| 27. | Overture to "Julius Cæsar" | Handel | 62. | Notturmo | F. Kalkbrenner |
| 28. | Serenade | F. Schubert | 63. | Che farò senza Euridice | Gluck |
| 29. | Aria (1765) | Gluck | 64. | Aria in A flat | Louis Spohr |
| 30. | Aria from "Alcina" | Handel | 65. | Cujus animam | Rossini |
| 31. | Aria from "Artaserse" (1730) | Leonardo Vinci | 66. | Air and Gavotte (from Orchestral Suite) | J. S. Bach |
| 32. | Cantata | Alessandro Scarlatti | | | |
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